

2008 Refuge Roads/ERFO Information Sheet

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was enacted August 10, 2005, as Public Law 109-59. SAFETEA-LU authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009. The Federal Lands Highways program provides for transportation planning, research, engineering, and construction of highways, roads, and parkways and transit facilities that provide access to or within public lands, national parks, and Indian reservations.

Refuge Roads Program:

Website: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/roads/index.html>

FHWA Website: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/roads/SAFETEA-LU.html>

The Refuge Roads program was created under the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The act specifies that the funds shall be used for maintenance and improvements on Refuge Roads within the National Wildlife Refuge System. This includes project planning and contract administration as well as construction. Enhancements such as comfort stations, parking lots, bicycle/pedestrian facilities and interpretive signage related to roads are also allowable.

What is included in the new SAFETEA-LU Bill?

- Increased funding level of \$29M
 - Region 4 approximately \$5.5M
- Included Trails
 - FHWA Trail guidance document is developed
 - National Trail Inventory is established and projects are selected
 - Funding level set at approximately \$1M
- Alternative Transportation
 - Allows 0.5% of the total public transportation
- 5% of project funds used off the roadway prism
 - Funds used for other items in overall project, i.e. kiosks, building portion

What are the requirements?

- Fee title Interest
 - This can be accomplished through a MOA.
- Maintenance Responsibility
 - This can be shared
- Public use Road – Open to the public more than 75% of the year

How are projects selected?

- Projects are prioritized and selected by Area Supervisors
 - Refuges should submit prioritized projects to the Area Supervisors at the appropriate data call time. Refuges need to identify any imperative projects with additional documentation.
- Projects are selected once every five years
 - There is limited opportunity to switch projects
 - Next data call will be sometime in Mid FY 2009
- Projects done by the FHWA are done in three phases:
 - Phase 1 Preliminary Engineering (PE)- Scoping, Environment review, and design (approx. 1 year process)
 - Phase 2 Construction (CN)- Procurement and Construction of Project (Determined construction period)
 - Phase 3 Construction Engineering (CE)- FHWA inspection fee (Released during construction)

For More Information Contact: Jo Ann Clark, Refuge Roads Coordinator, (404)679-4114, or Joe Girot, Refuge Roads Engineer, (404)679-7062, or Thad Clark, Facility Data Specialist, (404)679-7239

2008 Emergency Relief of Federally-Owned Roads (ERFO) Program:

Website: <http://www.efl.fhwa.dot.gov/erfo/index.htm>.

The intent of the ERFO Program is to pay the unusually heavy expenses to agencies that manage road systems for the repair and reconstruction of Federal roads to pre-disaster conditions. These Federal roads were damaged by a natural disaster over a wide area or by a catastrophic failure from any external cause. The ERFO Program is intended to supplement the commitment of resources by Federal agencies to help pay unusually heavy expenses resulting from extraordinary conditions.

How are damages submitted?

- The Refuge notifies the Regional Office ERFO Coordinator by phone, e-mail or fax of damage and cause.
 - Refugees need to take pictures, pictures, and more pictures.
 - Keep good records and documentation of emergency expenses (i.e. receipts).
- The ERFO coordinator makes an informal notification of intent request to the FHWA ERFO Coordinator.
- The refuge needs to send in initial damage cost estimates for all damaged assets, i.e. roads and bridges
- Regional Office ERFO Coordinator prepares formal Notice of Intent Letter from the Regional Director's signature.
- FHWA ERFO Coordinator will let the Service know if we receive a "positive" or "negative" finding. This tells us if qualify to submit for ERFO funding.
- Regional Office ERFO Coordinator and FHWA ERFO coordinator make arrangements to conduct a site visit to the refuge.
 - Refuge needs to provide pictures
 - If work has been completed, the refuge needs to submit all supporting documentation at this time.
 - The Damage Survey Reports (DSRs) are being prepared at this time from the site visit.
- The ERFO Coordinator then submits the DSRs, pictures, and Program of Projects (POP) for final approval.
- If approved, FHWA lets us know what amount we are approved for per asset or DSR.
- We need to then begin the scoping and design phase using our own funds.
 - There is the possibility that ERFO funds would be available to begin the scoping and design but this is not guaranteed.

What are the minimum dollar thresholds for eligibility of a site? The general guidance is:

	State	County	City
per site	\$5,000	\$5,000/	\$5,000
per mile	\$15,000	\$9,000/	\$5,000

The threshold for the entire disaster is \$750,000. This threshold can be met by a combination of federal agencies who submit for damage under the same FEMA disaster number or local storm event.

How long are the ER funds available?

ER funds are available to use until the end of the 2nd Federal FY after the Federal FY in which the incident occurred. The FHWA interprets "construction obligation" as the signing of the E-76 for construction funds, not PE or R/W funds, and must occur by the end of this 2nd Federal FY or the eligibility to acquire funds lapses and they are no longer available unless a time extension is granted by the FHWA Division office.

What are the Eligibility Requirements?

Refer to the FHWA ER Manual: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/erm/index.htm> for full details.

For More Information Contact: Jo Ann Clark, Refuge Roads Coordinator, (404)679-4114, or Joe Girot, Refuge Roads Engineer, (404)679-7062, or Thad Clark, Facility Data Specialist, (404)679-7239